

EXHIBIT C



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

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The Honorable Robert T. Reives, II
Democratic Leader
NC House of Representatives
300 N. Salisbury Street, Rm. 506
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Leader Reives:

I was informed by some members of the press late yesterday afternoon that you have concerns related to the implementation of Odyssey (eCourts) in our pilot counties of Harnett, Lee, Johnston, and Wake. I want to provide you with an update on the progress made since our two in-person meetings earlier this spring. I must also respectfully refute significant misinformation that has been shared with you. We value the productive working relationships we've had with you and members of the General Assembly, as well as the strong support the legislature has given to this transformative project. We all share the goal of successfully implementing eCourts and enabling judicial officials, families, small business owners, law enforcement officers, and others to conduct court business swiftly, fairly, and efficiently.

As you know, the transition to eCourts has been a long-term project covering many years and three judicial administrations. Former Chief Justice Mark Martin convened the North Carolina Commission on the Administration on Law and Justice (CALJ) shortly after taking office in 2015. CALJ was comprised of over sixty members, including leaders from the judiciary, academia, law enforcement, the private bar, other government agencies, and the public. Over two years, CALJ held sixty-two meetings and four public hearings, and solicited comments from multiple judicial stakeholder reports. In March 2017, CALJ released its final report and noted among its recommendations the need to transition from a paper-based court system to a vendor-developed, fully-integrated, digital case management system.

A press release issued yesterday incorrectly stated that the eCourts procurement process did not account for state specific functionality. NCAOC partnered with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in July 2018 to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) to effectuate the recommendation for a digital transformation. The goal of this partnership was to leverage and incorporate best practices and “lessons learned” from other states into North Carolina’s RFP process. Over several months, NCAOC and the NCSC held public meetings across the state to solicit feedback from judicial branch and law enforcement stakeholders. NCSC facilitated sessions in eight different cities and accepted feedback via an online tool to identify business needs for incorporation into the RFP. After receiving seven bids, a vendor selection committee consisting of judges, clerks, criminal attorneys, courthouse staff, and NCAOC





personnel diligently reviewed each bid and conducted vendor demonstrations of the finalists in Raleigh. In December 2018, the vendor selection committee unanimously recommended Tyler Technologies, Inc. (Tyler) after completing its review. After months of negotiation, NCAOC executed a ten-year contract with Tyler in June 2019 under the direction of former Chief Justice Cheri Beasley. The contract includes four major eCourts components: Guide & File, Brazos, eWarrants, and Odyssey.

Guide and File

Guide & File is a web-based service that enables attorneys and the public to create legal documents for filing by following easy-to-understand interview questions. Guide & File currently offers interviews in fourteen different case types, such as probate, small claims, and domestic violence protective orders. Since Guide & File's inception, users have conducted more than 31,000 interviews and approximately 90% of surveyed users consistently rate the system as "helpful" or "very helpful."

Brazos

From December 2020 through April 2021, NCAOC implemented Brazos, a replacement of North Carolina's legacy eCitation system. Brazos is available to all North Carolina law enforcement agencies (at no software costs to the agencies) and allows law enforcement officers to record and transmit data to efficiently process citation information to the court system. Brazos implementation was preceded by law enforcement officer solution validation and a month-long pilot by five law enforcement agencies. NCAOC also partnered with the North Carolina State Highway Patrol to provide training to 110 local law enforcement agencies over three months. Thanks to this partnership, over 564 law enforcement agencies now use Brazos which generates 93% of all citations statewide.

eWarrants

In July 2022, NCAOC launched eWarrants, which replaced the legacy, mainframe hosted NCAWARE warrants repository. Unlike Guide & File and Brazos, eWarrants was a new product that Tyler developed specifically for North Carolina. Prior to the statewide launch, law enforcement and judicial stakeholders were given regular updates via email, stakeholder conference presentations, and social media channels. NCAOC conducted over 170 pre-implementation training sessions with magistrates and clerks and over 60 law enforcement train-the-trainer training sessions.

Odyssey

NCAOC launched the final component of the eCourts initiative, Odyssey, in four pilot counties (Harnett, Johnston, Lee, and Wake) on February 13. Odyssey is a cloud-based,





integrated case management system that is designed to replace and consolidate NCAOC's legacy criminal, civil, and juvenile mainframe hosted indexes, the agency's financial management system, and the court system's paper-based filing and records management processes. Odyssey also includes an online public search component, Portal.

The press release incorrectly stated that NCAOC failed to sufficiently consider a data integration with DMV. Several years before launching Odyssey, NCAOC began working with external agencies (GDAC, DMV, OST, DOR, etc.) to develop new integrations to avoid any interruptions in exchanging data. For example, NCAOC and DMV initiated their development efforts in October 2019 and finalized an interagency memorandum of agreement in September 2020 outlining the scope of the new integration. From 2019 to present, NCAOC has and continues to regularly meet with external agencies to address data integration issues or concerns.

In anticipation of the digital transition, NCAOC began working with the North Carolina General Assembly and other stakeholders to update the statutes, rules, and procedures governing paper processes to accommodate future digital case management. These conforming changes were enacted in Session Laws 2019-243, 2021-47, and 2022-47. Current House Bill 193 contains additional proposed changes suggested by elected clerks and other stakeholders. NCAOC's Rules of Recordkeeping Committee, a longstanding group of elected clerks that promulgates the Rules of Recordkeeping for paper records, formed a working group to develop eCourts Rules of Recordkeeping. These comprehensive rules govern recordkeeping by the clerk's office in Odyssey and were adopted in February 2023.

In the months preceding Odyssey go-live, NCAOC offered over 90 multi-day training sessions in the four pilot counties and Mecklenburg County. NCAOC staff also conducted over 50 mock court walkthroughs in local courthouses that included all judicial groups. Attorneys practicing in pilot counties were given the opportunity to attend several sessions of local, in-person training and to access on-demand training on NCAOC's website on the use of File & Serve. NCAOC remains in contact with leaders within the North Carolina Bar Association and other private attorneys to solicit and answer any questions relating to the Odyssey transition.

Starting on February 13, 2023, NCAOC provided dedicated on-staff support in each of the pilot counties to assist with questions and to report any software defects or procedural issues. These staffing levels are as follows: 11 in Harnett, 11 in Johnston, 10 in Lee, and 31 in Wake. NCAOC has and will continue to ask Tyler to provide on-site technical staff to monitor system stability, help troubleshoot issues, and employ fixes as necessary.

To be sure, the transition to Odyssey has not been easy. Since February 13, NCAOC has logged and reported 573 application defects to Tyler. These defects range from minor configuration issues to errors within application processes that cause significant system





latency. To date, Tyler has resolved 393 of these issues. With assistance from DMV, Tyler successfully resolved an integration error that transmitted incorrect speeds on 22 speeding citations. NCAOC mailed notices to each affected driver alerting them to the error. NCAOC has identified several high priority defects that must be resolved prior to further expansion and has delayed the scheduled Mecklenburg County implementation until such resolutions are validated.

The press release also incorrectly stated that Odyssey issues have delayed the release of incarcerated individuals by “months at a time.” NCAOC takes any reports of improper detention very seriously. NCAOC has worked with local officials to investigate any specific complaints and has not found an instance where an Odyssey defect led to an individual’s delayed release from incarceration.

Despite these defects, pilot county courts remain fully operational and have handled nearly 50,000 cases using Odyssey. Handling these cases digitally has saved an estimated 465,000 pieces of paper from being added to court files. Public users conduct approximately 10,000 Portal searches daily, saving thousands of trips to local courthouses and calls to the clerk’s office. NCAOC is grateful to local courthouse officials and staff for their great work during this transition and we remain committed to improving the Odyssey experience for all users.

eCourts is a once-in-a-generation transformation spanning three judicial administrations and NCAOC is steadfast in ensuring a successful and complete statewide implementation. Again, I appreciate the productive working relationship we have with you and other members of the General Assembly and encourage you to share future concerns directly with NCAOC as we are the entity best equipped to address those issues. We appreciate your past and continued collaboration with our team in improving the statewide administration of justice. Thank you for your service to our great state.

Sincerely,

Ryan S. Boyce
Director

